

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



Spot Report: LyondellBassell Acetic Acid Reactor Vessel Failure - Spot Report #1

US Environmental Protection Agency

Report Date: 7/28/2021

Last edited 7/28/2021 5:16 PM UTC

Overview: At 8:46 pm CST, EPA Region 6 Phone Duty Officer (EPA PDO) received a report from the National Response Center (1311972) from LyondellBassell located at 1515 Cutoff Road, LaPorte, Harris County, TX. The incident occurred at 7:23 pm CST. The company reported that they had a failure of a reaction vessel that contained 103,00 pounds of a mixture of Acetic Acid, Methyl Iodide, and Hydrogen Iodide. The incident resulted in 30 injuries with 3 transported to the hospital. The released material is draining into their unit drains and underground drainage system to the facility waste wastewater treatment plant that is designed to treat these types of wastes. They are using a water spray to knock down any vapors as well as to move the materials down the drains to the wastewater system. The company initiated fence line air monitoring and notified their industrial neighbors of the incident. The company reported that their highest reading along the fence line near the release location was 4.5 ppm acetic acid. Additionally, the company dispatched CTEH (contract air monitoring team) to assist. Harris County Fire Marshall's Office HazMat Team is on-scene assisting in the emergency response effort. Additionally, the Harris County Pollution Control Services is on-scene assisting with air monitoring. Harris County has not identified any air monitoring impacts nor have they received any odor complaints from the public. The TCEQ is on-scene coordinating with the company representatives and monitoring response activities. Potential areas of impact are all industrial. Based upon information received from Harris County Fire Marshalls Office, there are 2 deceased workers. Note: The closest residential properties appear to be 1.19 miles south of the release point (on the south side of SH 225) with winds out of the SSW blowing away from the residential properties. At this time, the Phone Duty Officer does not plan on dispatching an EPA Team to the incident as it appears to be stable with no anticipated impacts to the public. OSC Moore will continue to monitor the incident but it appears that the situation is under control.

At 8:00 am on 7/28, the RP reported that they will slowly start the decon process of the unit by washing it down with fire water which will go to their wastewater treatment system. Once completed, they hope to begin investigations. They have heard from CSB which is meeting today to discuss how they want to proceed. The RP will continue to perform air monitoring with CTEH (contract air monitoring company). They have reported "No Detections" in the offsite areas including near SH225 (residential area). The only detections obtained have been near the incident location. The RP reported that they have only one polymer unit currently operating and the rest of the plant is shut down. EPA Region 6 has decided to deploy an OSC to do an on-site post event follow-up with the Responsible Party and obtain an incident update.

State, Local and other Federal Agency Actions and Roles: Harris County Fire Marshalls Office - Hazmat Team responded to the incident to oversee the response actions from the local level and TCEQ Houston Regional Office from the State Level. Harris County Pollution Control Services is also involved and performed air monitoring during the event to document any off-site impacts. Harris County is the lead agency for this event.

EPA Actions and Roles: EPA Region 6 has coordinated with the Responsible Party, Harris County Fire Marshall's Office, and the TCEQ Houston Regional Office. On the morning of July 28, The EPA Region 6 has dispatched an OSC to conduct an on-site post event follow-up with the Responsible Party and obtain an incident update.

Media Interest: High

Media Links:

<https://abc13.com/la-porte-chemical-leak-lyondellbasell-2-killed-dozens-injured/10913127/>

Note:

The EPA will continue to monitor and provide updates as needed

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY